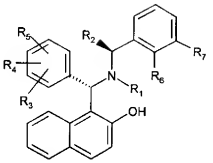
Listing of Claims

1. (original) A compound of the formula



(I)

wherein

R_1 is optionally substituted lower alkyl or aralkyl;

R_2 is optionally substituted lower alkyl;

R_3 and R_4 are independently hydrogen, halo, lower alkyl, alkoxy or trifluoromethyl; or

R_3 and R_4 combined together with the carbon atoms to which they are attached form an optionally substituted fused 6-membered aromatic ring provided that R_3 and R_4 are attached to carbon atoms adjacent to each other;

R_5 is hydrogen, lower alkyl, lower alkoxy or halo;

R_6 and R_7 are hydrogen; or

R_6 and R_7 combined together with the carbon atoms to which they are attached form a fused 6-membered aromatic ring;

provided that

(i) R_3, R_4, R_5, R_6 and R_7 are not hydrogen when R_1 is methyl, ethyl, pentyl, allyl, 3-buten-1-yl, benzyl or phenethyl and R_2 is methyl; or

(ii) R_3, R_4, R_6 and R_7 are not hydrogen when R_1 and R_2 are methyl and R_5 is methyl located at the 4-position;

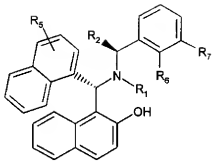
or an enantiomer thereof; or an enantiomeric mixture thereof.

2. (original) A compound according to claim 1, wherein

R_3 and R_4 combined together with the carbon atoms to which they are attached form an optionally substituted fused 6-membered aromatic ring provided that R_3 and R_4 are attached to carbon atoms adjacent to each other;

or an enantiomer thereof; or an enantiomeric mixture thereof.

3. (original) A compound according to claim 2 of the formula



(IA)

wherein

R_1 is optionally substituted C_{1-4}alkyl;

R_2 is methyl;

R_5 is hydrogen;

R_6 and R_7 are hydrogen; or

R_6 and R_7 combined together with the carbon atoms to which they are attached form a fused 6-membered aromatic ring;

or an enantiomer thereof; or an enantiomeric mixture thereof.

4. (original) A compound according to claim 3, wherein

R_6 and R_7 are hydrogen;

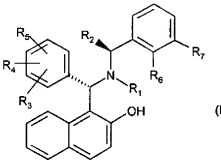
or an enantiomer thereof; or an enantiomeric mixture thereof.

5. (original) A compound according to claim 4, wherein

R_1 is methyl;

or an enantiomer thereof; or an enantiomeric mixture thereof.

6. (original) A method for converting a carbonyl compound to a chiral alcohol in the presence of a suitable organozinc reagent and a compound of the formula



(I)

wherein

R_1 is optionally substituted lower alkyl or aralkyl;

R_2 is optionally substituted lower alkyl;

R_3 and R_4 are independently hydrogen, halo, lower alkyl, alkoxy or trifluoromethyl; or

R_3 and R_4 combined together with the carbon atoms to which they are attached form an optionally substituted fused 6-membered aromatic ring provided that R_3 and R_4 are attached to carbon atoms adjacent to each other;

R_5 is hydrogen, lower alkyl, lower alkoxy or halo;

R_6 and R_7 are hydrogen; or

R_6 and R_7 combined together with the carbon atoms to which they are attached form a fused 6-membered aromatic ring;

provided that

(i) R_3, R_4, R_5, R_6 and R_7 are not hydrogen when R_1 is methyl, ethyl, pentyl, allyl, 3-buten-1-yl, benzyl or phenethyl and R_2 is methyl; or

(ii) R_3, R_4, R_6 and R_7 are not hydrogen when R_1 and R_2 are methyl and R_5 is methyl located at the 4-position;

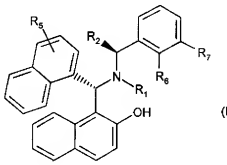
or an enantiomer thereof; or an enantiomeric mixture thereof.

7. (original) A method according to claim 6, wherein

R_3 and R_4 combined together with the carbon atoms to which they are attached form an optionally substituted fused 6-membered aromatic ring provided that R_3 and R_4 are attached to carbon atoms adjacent to each other;

or an enantiomer thereof; or an enantiomeric mixture thereof.

8. (original) A method according to claim 7, wherein a compound of formula (I) has the formula



(IA)

wherein

R_1 is optionally substituted C_{1-4}alkyl;

R_2 is methyl;

R_5 is hydrogen;

R_6 and R_7 are hydrogen; or

R_6 and R_7 combined together with the carbon atoms to which they are attached form a fused 6-membered aromatic ring;

or an enantiomer thereof; or an enantiomeric mixture thereof.

9. (original) A method according to claim 8, wherein

R_6 and R_7 are hydrogen;

or an enantiomer thereof; or an enantiomeric mixture thereof.

10. (original) A method according to claim 9, wherein

R_1 is methyl;

or an enantiomer thereof; or an enantiomeric mixture thereof.

11. (original) A method according to claim 6, wherein the carbonyl compound is an aromatic aldehyde.

12. (original) A method according to claim 11, wherein the chiral alcohol is a diarylmethanol.

13. (original) A method according to claim 12, wherein the organozinc reagent is generated by reacting a compound of the formula

$$R_8B(OH)_2 \qquad (V)$$

wherein R_8 represents aryl; with dimethyl zinc or diethyl zinc.

14. (original) A method according to claim 12, wherein the reaction mixture further comprises a polyether.

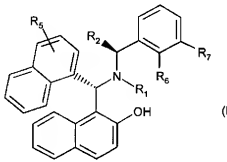
15. (original) A method according to claim 14, wherein the polyether is dimethoxypolyethylene glycol.

16. (original) A method according to claim 12, wherein

R_3 and R_4 combined together with the carbon atoms to which they are attached form an optionally substituted fused 6-membered aromatic ring provided that R_3 and R_4 are attached to carbon atoms adjacent to each other;

or an enantiomer thereof; or an enantiomeric mixture thereof.

17. (original) A method according to claim 16, wherein a compound of formula (I) has the formula



(IA)

wherein

R_1 is optionally substituted C_{1-4}alkyl;

R_2 is methyl;

R_5 is hydrogen;

R_6 and R_7 are hydrogen; or

R_6 and R_7 combined together with the carbon atoms to which they are attached form a fused 6-membered aromatic ring;

or an enantiomer thereof; or an enantiomeric mixture thereof.

18. (original) A method according to claim 17, wherein

R_6 and R_7 are hydrogen;

or an enantiomer thereof; or an enantiomeric mixture thereof.

19. (original) A method according to claim 18, wherein

R_1 is methyl;

or an enantiomer thereof; or an enantiomeric mixture thereof.

20. (original) A method according to claim 6, wherein the reaction mixture further comprises a polyether.

21. (original) A method according to claim 18, wherein the polyether is dimethoxypolyethylene glycol.